

# WHAT GOD IS DOING...

Quarterly Newsletter

December 2016



**GOD IS ON THE MOVE AND I'M SO EXCITED!!!**

*Who despises the day of small things? (Zechariah 4:10)*

This scripture opening is not as lengthy as others prior, but it is packed with meaning. The Nation of Israel had returned from exile after 70 years and were rebuilding the Temple. Some who had remembered the former glory of Solomon's Temple were discouraged at the sight of the refurbished Temple. Although I'm not discouraged, my experience amongst the Christian Body in this facility is tremendously different than OK, MS, & AZ. In those facilities, I was quickly accepted and elevated to serve the Body in the capacity of leadership. Here, the leadership is well established and no great need to raise up another. Humility and patience is the answer God has given me. He's called me to enjoy the fact that someone else is responsible in overseeing the Body in the capacity I'm used to. Although I love the work, this period gives me good time to reflect, see the leadership examples of others, and soak in many learning opportunities.

...**IN MY LIFE:** Well, I'm all signed up for college courses in Palo Alto College. I will be taking the specific classes that will allow me to obtain two certificates the State of California will recognize in the counseling discipline, working my way to an AA in the same discipline. I'm excited to learn all that the LORD will provide me through these studies. My placement scores in reading & comprehension came in real high, but I will have to take some refresher courses in math. All knowledge is from God and I will be glad to take even those classes that are not used in the counseling field. Who knows, I may finally learn how to balance my checkbook, chuckle! The credits I receive will be accepted in the California College and U.C. System. This will allow me to work now for furthering my education after incarceration in six years.

I will have to look back at previous newsletters for this period to know how many years in a row I have received a Christmas card from my precious niece, Lila. I just received one again. The expressions of thoughtfulness give me much hope and strength knowing that she has not forgotten me, even though she was barely a teen the last time I saw her over 25 years ago. Time is flying by so quickly for me as the LORD has given me a full life with very busy days. Six more years until I can connect with my niece on a different level once again. I know that as she witnesses, the man God has formed in me, others in my family will, once again welcome me back into their lives. I look forward to God fulfilling His promises to me to restore all my family relationships I so irresponsibly took for granted.

My experience in Christ is that His most valuable and precious blessings tend to take a fight to obtain. Every quarter this year He has allowed me to study thoroughly one book a month out of the Minor Prophets found in the Old Testament. I'm in my last book, but I will not be able to finish prior to year's end. NO BIGGIE! By the middle of January I will have a deep and thorough grasp of these books and will be able to pass on all the wisdom, knowledge and understanding, along with some very practical application to others from these ancient writings. To encourage the readers of this newsletter, I repeat for the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter in sequence a description of my experience in these studies; "They are, by far, the greatest encounter I have ever had with God through His Word." Write me if you want more detail on how God led me through these studies, or re-read the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter 2016 newsletter for most of the process.

In the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter newsletter I wrote about how I suffered a great loss (to me) of some very precious books due to the transfer back to CA (CDCR) from out of state facilities. I also wrote how God led me to deal with the impact of this loss upon my soul. He brought me to the conclusion that it was Him that allowed me to have the books in the first place, not to be concerned with the loss, and that He could bless me again if He chooses. Well, Hallelujah! One of the books I had to part with was as old as the Bible; The Complete Works of Josephus (A Jewish Historian employed by the Roman Gov.). Well, haphazardly (I think divine providence describes it best) I walked up to a Brother, Tim, who had a puzzled look on his face. When asked about it, he stated he was trying to see if he could give the book in his hand to someone who would benefit from it. When I saw the title, I almost scared Brother Tim at my response. It was the exact copy of the Josephus book I had to part with in AZ. He was glad to give it to me. There are many books floating around this facility and I was also blessed with a beautiful leather-bound, gold-leaved edition of one of my favorite yearly devotionals, My Upmost for His Highest (Aswald Chambers). I believe every Christian should experience this devotional at least once in their lifetime. I'm glad to have my own edition and will enjoy it for many years to come. I was also given a five-book compilation of one of my favorite authors, C.S. Lewis. It includes a few books I have often read about, but never had, those which I have been wanting to get a hold of. Please look forward to the upcoming Book Reviews in future newsletters on these books.

The LORD had chosen to make another way since no one answered the special request I placed in the last newsletter. I asked for consideration and aid in obtaining a new typewriter to continue this work. Mine has gone on the blink, and I can't afford a replacement. I truly believed the LORD would use this newsletter to obtain this aid. I still believe He led me to write the request, but only to manifest Himself as Jehovah-Jireh (The Lord is Provider, Genesis 22:8). I also believe that as many read the request the Throne of Grace was bombarded with the petition for God to provide. The person willing to give me the typewriter came to me one day and stated he felt God show him the work being done off the current typewriter and that he should not require any financial compensation, but should just give me the typewriter. GLORY TO THE KING! The next day I received a letter from Sister Rhea, (Word Processor for this newsletter) and she stated she was praying God to place it upon the heart of this Brother to just give me the

machine. She was sensitive on how God led her to pray, and he was obedient and followed God's leading, and now I am set to type for the next 5-6 years, I hope! I am so grateful for God's provision and His ability to move upon the hearts of His Saints! THANK YOU JESUS!

**...THROUGH MY LIFE:** In discussion with Brother Leonard about some of the ways God has led me, the Weekly Prayer Focus Ministry came up. As I explained the benefits to the Body of Christ this ministry contained, he became interested. He had me develop this ministry on paper, designed for this Body of Believers. After a couple of "hammering-out-discussions," he presented to the Leadership the Mission Statement. After a month, the Leadership approved its installation into the Body's Operations starting January 2017. From that point on, one category out of four general focuses of prayer will be presented to the Body and a specific focus named. The General Focuses are: Chapel Operations, This Facility, Families, and the World. The Brothers will be encouraged to lift the Prayer Focus for the week up while in their own closets and in any prayer groups they participate in throughout the week. This practice will bring this Body of Believers into one mind and on one accord in this area, promoting unity within this Body. I look forward to seeing God move in powerful ways through this effort and ministry.

Last quarter I was asked by Brother Joe Morris (MS) if it would be ok to place the newsletter on the internet. I could not believe he had to ask! We, as witnesses for Christ are to share the deposit He's made in our lives with as many people as possible. I already wrote him back and gave the affirmative to his question. I will be monitoring his letters for the installation of the newsletter onto the world-wide web and will pass on this information to you all as soon as I get it. In the last seven years the newsletter has been generated, it has grown from under 10 people the first year to over 75 now. It goes to destinations from California to Florida, Idaho to Texas, and even the Philippines. I am so excited at this latest possibility of its growth.

In the opening of the newsletter I stated that there was no room for new leaders coming into this Body. That is not to say God's presence and calling in my life has gone unnoticed. Neither has His desire to use this surrendered life for His honor and glory. The Body's government is structured and I am under Brother Leonard L. as he operates as a Deacon. One of the ministries he oversees is the Intercessory Prayer Ministry. When I arrived at this facility this was one ministry the LORD immediately drew me to be involved in and we have been laboring side by side since then. This quarter Brother Leonard was led to ask me to oversee the ministry under him. I've been doing this so far for about 1 ½ months now and the LORD has been leading me to impart, little by little, all the valuable aspects of group intercessory prayer he has taught me in the past. If you have known me for the last eight years, you will remember the many times group intercessory prayer has come up as a subject in the newsletter and how much of an impact God has allowed His influence working through my life has come about. Please pray for me in this area.

**...AROUND MY LIFE:** I am so grateful for the many miraculous ways and many great people God has allowed me to come into fellowship with. In the last newsletter, I recorded mystery person named Jacqueline Catlin Harris out of NC. I had no idea who she was or how she got the information to be able to write me. After two more contacts, she finally revealed herself. Here's the miracle! Long time readers of the newsletter have read of Brother Reginald Ashlock. We spent close 2 ½ years together in OK. He paroled, and through his submission to God's will in his life, he obtained gainful employment, became established and ordained as a Minister in a local fellowship in his community in which he is still serving Christ with all his heart. At my request, he gave me the address to his fellowship and the LORD led me to send "What God is Doing" to his pastor for the last six years. I rarely receive any feedback or correspondence from the many pastors who the LORD has led me to continually send the newsletter. I understand Pastor's schedules are packed and responding to a newsletter can be taxing, especially if they do not know the person directly who sent it. For me, I'm just being obedient to His Spirit's leading. Well, Pastor Catlin of Gospel Christian Center has been reading the newsletter over the years, but with a Pastor's schedule, has not been able to respond. A very, very understandable dilemma. Apparently, she took this to heart and informed her daughter, Jacqueline (YUPI) of this and requested she take up the correspondence with me. It is through this process of six years in the making, the LORD has allowed me to be blessed by entering another mutually edifying and encouraging relationship. Sister Jacqueline's letters to me are biblically based and scripture filled showing that she truly is a woman of God and a dear Sister in Christ. Thank You, Jesus, for giving Sister Jacqueline an obedient and sensitive heart.

On 10/29 this Body of Believers received a special blessing through a guest minister, Brother C.J. Orndorff. God has truly called this Brother to Prison Ministry. His love for the inmate is very evident and he has gone into many facilities over the years. He explained to this Body, God has now called him to go national. We were so blessed by his humor as he made all laugh and feel very comfortable. No doubt, a seasoned musician, he led this Body in God honoring praise and worship; leading us as we lifted our voices in song. Again, no doubt his relationship with God is deep and strong as he brought forth a powerful message from the Throne of God. This is not his first visit to this facility and I am looking forward to his next. Please say a prayer for this Brother and his ministry to expand as he believes God is leading him to go nationwide.

Our Chapel attendees were also blessed on 10/29 to witness 11 men go through the sacrament of Baptism. It was a blessed ceremony, and one that is held in high value to this Body. I am so glad it is viewed in this way. Since the ceremony, I have witnessed several of these men grow strong in their commitment to Christ. Unfortunately, I have also witnessed some of these men encounter pulls of this world that they could not resist. The enemy rages at new believers in the incarcerated community. He does everything he can to snatch the seed of faith planted in these young believer's lives. Please pray for them earnestly as they enter a fight for their very souls.



Another HUGE blessing came through this Chapel, we were able to witness a miracle that was 16 years in the making, along with prayers too numerous to count. A GREAT EVENT! It starts off with Dr. Cho, who 16 years ago, visited many Korean young men in LA County Jail. One of them, John P., had been sentenced to life in prison at a very young age. John's attitude and perspective on life was self-destructive, to say the least, and he refused the offer of grace through the message of Jesus Christ that Dr. Cho had brought to him. He not only refused, he refused passionately, much to Dr. Cho's sadness. After numerous attempts by Dr. Cho to minister to John, he finally lost touch with him. This encounter motivated Dr. Cho to develop Harvest Bible College, correspondence courses going into prisons all over the country. I have witnessed many men in every facility I've been in over the last eight years taking these valuable courses. Within the last year, John came into the saving knowledge of Christ and became a new creation in Him. He was one of the 11 men who was baptized that I mentioned earlier in the newsletter. Events and decisions were made that allowed Dr. Cho to start coming into this facility on a regular basis, but he knew nothing of John being here or his recent conversion. It was arranged so that when Dr. Cho approached the podium in his initial service in our Chapel that John would come out of a door behind him. The man who so passionately denied Christ 16 years earlier came out of the room and when Dr. Cho saw him, he immediately recognized him as the young man sentenced to life he had been praying for over the years. It was a great reunion as they gave each other a big hug, both faces brimming with tears. Both John P. and Dr. Cho gave testimonies of their first meeting and expressed extreme gladness to know they will be spending eternity enjoying each other's presence, as well as the presence of Jesus Christ. Deep, heartfelt prayers over the years by Dr. Cho, God's amazing grace and God's Holy Spirit were the keys to this miracle.

I have come across many great Brothers while incarcerated, but I felt moved to write specifically of two, Brother Tim C. and Sean J. These two Brothers arrived on this scene just prior to my arrival, but their impact upon this yard is felt by believer and unbeliever alike. They have established a "Ministry of Doctrine" that proves they are men of deep study and commitment to the truths found in Scripture. They also hold a type of "new believer" study on Wed. night on the yard. They have both been raised up as Deacons recognized in this Body of believers, Brother Sean was also given the reigns of the Building Bible Study that meets 4 days out of the week. They both put together a great narrative for Christmas that touched on God's Plan of Salvation through the O.T. until the Birth of Christ. They are tireless in serving this Body with great teachings and display a love for God and their fellow incarcerated I rarely witnessed in the 11 years of my own. It is an honor and privilege to be serving God and this Body beside these men. Please keep them both in your prayers. I am positive they are destined to continue to do great things while incarcerated and even greater things after.

### BOOK REVIEW

**SPECIAL PROMOTIONAL NEWS:** Earline Kline (Idaho) is a number of things to me, a dear friend, precious Sister in Christ, fellow author & inspirational writer. Her career spans decades. Her writings have inspired millions around the world and I am privileged to have her in my life. She wrote for many years for a daily devotional called "The Anchor," and has now compiled these writings in a book(s). One of them has just come out, "The Ways of the Lord." I haven't read it yet, but I do have a past "The Anchor" monthly devotional I kept, treasured and re-read every once in a while. Her writings are that good! December 15<sup>th</sup> was the come-out date for the book predicted. I'm sure that if you ping "Earline Kline," your search engine will link you to her webpage and ultimately how to obtain her book. I am confident that all who read her writings will walk away fully satisfied they have spent their time well, were greatly encouraged and edified in the LORD. If you do get her book, please contact her webpage and let her know it was this newsletter prompting you. She has been a great blessing to me for many years now and I hope the utilization of this resource is a blessing to her as well.

**The Last Page (Joe E. Morris):** What a great read! I don't read much fiction, and I lean more towards established classics, but this modern-day writing was expertly put together. The characters were vividly described and the reader really comes to know them as people they can identify with. This book is really two books as it interchanges from the period of the Arab Spring uprising across the Middle East to 70 A.D. when Rome was destroying Jerusalem, and the period thereafter. God's hand was truly in the development of these two stories and if you enjoy an emotional ride as you read, this book is for you. You will not regret the time you put into this colorful, imaginative and scholarly packed book. I know all who read it will enjoy it. Please go online to meet Dr. Joe E. Morris. I'm positive he'll be glad to hear from you after your read!

**How to Pray (R.A. Torrey):** If you collect these newsletters (chuckle) you can go back and see a review of this book in the newsletters from earlier years. Recommended by Brother Leonard, a great treatise on prayer by Brother Torrey. Insightful, encouraging, inspirational, and motivates one to prayer. Its contents move the reader to seek a deeper, stronger prayer life and intimacy with Jesus Christ. A great read for anyone who could use a little motivation in seeking the face of God and the patience that comes with that pursuit.

**Waiting on God (Andrew Murray):** A TREASURE, nothing less but a treasure for the Christian Body to feed off. Brother Murray goes through the scriptures and finds those that motivate one to wait on God in prayer. He expounds on the promises and benefits that come with doing so. Another inspirational and motivating read on prayer, counseling the reader to just sit and list and wait until God chooses to move on one's heart and mind. This book strengthens the valuable perspective God placed upon my heart years ago about prayer, "What God has to say is far more important than what I have to say." God has no problem with hearing my request

and questions, but I have found it very necessary to take time to stop and listen, be patient, and hear His voice and direction. This book solidifies this perspective.

### PRAYER FOCUSES

- Brother David Luna (AZ), husband of Sister Debra Luna who pastors Lion of Juda Lighthouse in Elk City, OK. He is suffering from the after effect of a severe heat-stroke last summer that has prevented him from working. Please pray for his restored health and provision during this financial challenge.
- Unity for the Body of Christ through the Weekly Prayer Focuses.
- Prayer of Thanksgiving. Many have prayed for my Brother Carlos's fight with colon cancer, I just received a letter that he is cancer free. He looks real healthy in the pictures I get from sister too – Hallelujah!
- Sister Jacqueline C. Harris and the financial struggles she faces.

### QUOTE TO THINK ON

"The opportunity for great deeds seldom arrives, but the opportunity for good deeds arrives often every day." (Paul Yoder-Gap Mills, WV)

### SPECIAL THANKS



- For all those beautiful Christmas and Holiday Cards that came in the mail. Thank You!
- Pastor Debra Luna (4 stamps)
- Sister Jacqueline C. Harris – for a 2<sup>nd</sup> gift package of writing paper, envelopes and gift of \$14
- Sister Rita Danilyan (36 stamps)
- My Sister, Elisa who placed all the addresses on labels I send mail to and made pages and pages of copies. I got address labels for days (chuckle)!

### MINISTRY NEEDS & HELPS (Phil 4:17)

- Regular #10 envelopes (40 at a time can be sent to me regular mail)
- Typing Paper (place in a big envelope, up to 500 sheets)
- Lined Writing Paper or Tablets (same as above)
- Note Pads, 5x8 (same as above)

### MEDICINE FOR THE SOUL

**ATTENTION ALL READERS:** I'm looking for material for this section. If you know any funny, short jokes or sayings, could you please mail them to me. Thank you!

*Though no one can go back and make a brand-new start, anyone can start from now and make a brand-new end!*" (submitted by Rhea)

**MAY THE FULLNESS OF ALL GOD'S BLESSINGS BE UPON ALL OF YOU ALWAYS. I HOPE YOU HAVE ENJOYED READING THE NEWSLETTER. PLEASE REMEMBER THE PRAYER FOCUSES!**

Facilitator: Shirley Jones  
Word Processor: Rhea Rouse  
Editor/Writer: Jose G. Chavez  
Copies: Jim Taylor–Trinity Fellowship  
Elisa Zepeda–My lovely Sister



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*Jose G. Chavez*